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THE LITERATURE SECRETARY AT WORK

BY SALOME D. NELSON

"*Study to show thyself approved unto God.*
A workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

LITERATURE DEPARTMENT OF THE
WOMAN'S BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

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In the business of missions there is no more important office than that of the secretary of literature. She does not manage the business, keep the books, nor handle the funds; but she looks after the stock.

Her Stock in Trade.

The stock consists of those organs of information which explain the business, locate and define the branch offices, describe the fields of operation, discuss the facilities for expansion and the fine opportunities for investment, and furnish all possible information regarding the returns. These organs of information are the missionary periodicals, especially the *Home Mission Monthly* and *Over Sea and Land*, letters from missionaries, maps, books of travel and biography, original papers on mission topics and the leaflets, particularly those published by the Woman's Board of Home Missions.

It is most important that the stock of this business shall be bright, attractive and up to date, and that the one who handles it shall be perfectly familiar with it and know just what portion to supply to each locality or individual, as the need may be, and to so display the stock that those not interested will be tempted to read. To this end the literature secretary needs to possess intelligence, enthusiasm, executive ability, tact, patience, and consecration.

For the encouragement of the literature secretary there is the fact that no work brings more blessed returns for faithfulness.

Some Results Achieved.

Who can estimate the results which have followed the growing interest in missions through the labors of our secretaries of literature?

In 1894 there were about 100 presbyterial literature secretaries; now there are 180. Then there were 16 synodical officers; now there are 25. Ten years ago $709.86 was received at the rooms of the Board for the sale of literature; 1899 has seen these figures increased to $2,099.78, while the subscriptions to the *Home Mission Monthly* have been increased by 6,600 in the past four years. We would not claim that this growth is all due to the secretaries of literature, but we believe it is mainly the result of their labors, as is also the growing use of programmes at the monthly meetings, the literature table at Presbyterial and Synodical meetings, and the formation of Missionary Reading Clubs and Libraries.

We then who are called to this office should be willing to bring to it our best, and expect to put much of ourselves into it, looking ever for the divine guidance that we may be "workmen that need not to be ashamed."

Suggestions from Reports of Secretaries of Literature.

Whether a local, presbyterial, or synodical officer the secretary of literature should be expected to give a report at each meeting of her society.

One literature secretary in Michigan began her first year by sending to every society in her Presbytery copies of the following:

"Hints and Helps for Local Societies."

"Catalogue of Publications of Woman's Board of Home Missions."

"General Fund."

"General Building and Repair Fund."

"Contingent Fund."

A society in Kansas reports that they write out the programme for the next meeting on small pieces of cardboard, tying one or two good leaflets to the cards with baby ribbon, and give them to the different members, especially those who take little interest in missions.

One literature secretary writes: "I pushed the 'Closed School Plan' just as thoroughly as possible, sending to each society a copy of the leaflet explaining it, accompanied by a personal letter from myself. I also sent literature to those societies not represented at the Presbyterial meeting.

"Five sets of letters have been sent to each society during the year, to keep the work moving."

One local secretary of literature has adopted the plan of collecting one cent a month from each member of the society for literature.

A presbyterial secretary from Missouri has discovered the power in personal contact: "I called a meeting of the local secretaries of literature in my Presbytery, and we had a face to face talk which was most helpful. The returns this spring show a large increase of leaflets used as a result of that meeting; 14 new subscriptions to the *Home Mission Monthly* and 42 to *Over Sea and Land*."

"I have been making an effort to have secretaries of literature appointed in the Christian Endeavor Societies."

"In our Christian Endeavor Society a member of our missionary committee, who was appointed secretary of literature, has done excellent work. The office was given to a popular young gentleman because it was a new department in our work and he was appointed to secure the interest of the young men in the society. Several members subscribe for missionary magazines, and the leaflets on the monthly topics are recommended by name."

"Special attention has been given to work in unorganized churches. Packages of leaflets worth from 50 to 60 cents have been sent to all churches having no Woman's Society, and an effort has been made to have a regular secretary of literature appointed in all."

"In addition to the regular report blanks, the enclosed questions were sent to each society. Special stress has been laid and will be the coming year on: (1) The Uniform Magazine Canvass in October. (2) The work among children and Christian Endeavor Societies. (3) The Missionary Reading Circle (where each member is pledged to

read missionary literature one-half hour each week), the Circulating Leaflet and the Missionary Library."

A Missionary Book Club has been started in one society with 12 members and 12 books, which pass from one to the other each month.

One Presbytery in Illinois purchases the leaflets from the Contingent Fund and gives them away.

"I have on hand complete files of the *Assembly Herald*, and offer to look up matter for missionary meetings and to assist in the preparation of papers."

"We hold Missionary Teas monthly, or sometimes not so often, and a bright leaflet in an attractive cover—generally hand-painted—is given as a souvenir."

"At the silver anniversary of our Presbyterial Society an interesting collection of leaflets was made into a package, wrapped in silver paper, tied with silver cord and sold as souvenirs."

At the twenty-fifth anniversary of a local society an interesting narrative, rolled in silver paper and tied with a dainty ribbon, was given as a souvenir to each person in attendance as she left the meeting.

The "traveling leaflet" plan has proved successful in many societies. An attractive case like a card case is made of pieces of silk, in one side of which is placed one or two good leaflets; in the other side an envelope containing a list of 10 or 15 names and a note reading somewhat like the following:

"We are 'traveling' in the interests of Home Missions and therefore invite your perusal.

"Having accepted our invitation please cross your name off the accompanying list and place our value, 3 cents, in the enclosed envelope. Will you then kindly see that we are placed in the hands of the person whose name appears next on the list and that the date of the transfer is written opposite your name?

"As we wish to accomplish our journey in the shortest possible time please do not detain us longer than three days.

"CINDY'S CHANCE," } Traveling
"HER OFFERING," } Leaflets.

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"CINDY'S CHANCE," } Traveling
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The name of the secretary of literature should be the last on the list of names so that the case will be returned to her with its contents when it has completed its circuit. The women of an entire congregation may be reached by this plan if several of these little cases be sent forth at one time. A plain, strong, paper envelope may be used instead of the silk case. This plan has a two-fold result: it diffuses missionary information and realizes a small fund for the work of the secretary of literature.

A Presbyterial secretary of literature writes: "I have found it a good plan to collect from each auxiliary society and band in the presbytery one original paper a year on some missionary theme, and to pass these around among the auxiliaries."

Item Envelopes, labeled with the names of the field or people they represent, in which newspaper clippings, etc., may be collected, afford most helpful information in the preparation of programmes.

Excellent for this use is the Clippings Book published by the Woman's Board of Home Missions for 25 cents.

A carefully prepared missionary library in active circulation is an important factor in any society. Appoint a Library Committee whose duty it shall be to care for the books and devise methods of circulation. Call for a monthly report of this committee, thus giving an opportunity for a brief description of some new book published, the number loaned during the month and the titles bearing on the next month's subject.

If your society cannot afford to purchase books for a library secure a complete file of the leaflet publications of our Woman's Board (price $2, postpaid). Arrange these topically in numbered envelopes, which may be loaned to the members of the society.

A scrap book of clippings bearing on the regular missionary topics, collected from all periodicals, is most valuable to an active society. The secretary of literature should have the care of the book, and all members of the society should be asked to collect and contribute clippings.

The Art Gallery.

The literature secretary should not hesitate to step over into the department of art. It is her special privilege to furnish information to the members of her society, whether it be by means of the printed or pictured page. Therefore, urge the appointment of an Art Committee. This committee should supply the society with maps of all the mission fields, and pictures illustrating points of missionary interest. The maps may be purchased or rented from headquarters, but a much better plan is to make them at home. Study the leaflet, "The Use of Maps in Missionary Meetings," published by the Woman's Board of Home Missions; price, 1 cent.

Pictures, cut from magazines or papers, should be arranged in one group to represent some mission station, the people, customs, etc. These pictures, mounted on stout card board, bound with braid, and supplied with rings at the top, afford excellent object lessons in the study of any of our exceptional populations, and combine to produce an art gallery which will be a constant source of pleasure and profit to any society.

The presbyterial secretary of literature should insert in her book containing the names and addresses of each auxiliary secretary the date of each auxiliary meeting, with the subject studied, that she may send the proper letters and leaflets in time for the meeting.

Reply postal cards serve well for securing this information, as well as the number of members, the number of copies of the magazines taken, and any special methods used in the auxiliary.

Talk of the news gathered from the missionary periodicals with as much freedom and enthusiasm as you would of the latest book or most recent discovery.

Announce at the meetings the new leaflets, occasionally giving an outline or reading some one of special interest, and have copies of this for sale.

If it is thought best to distribute leaflets free in either the auxiliary or presbyterial society, a portion of the contingent fund should be given for this purpose, and the literature secretary should

keep a list of all such leaflets, that there shall be no repetition.

Don'ts.

Don't fail to send subscriptions for the magazines to the office of publication before the expiration of previous subscriptions.

Don't rely upon postals and letters where personal interviews are possible.

Don't wait for something to turn up in order to enlarge your work. Turn something up.

Don't speak apologetically of your work. It offers cultivation of mind and heart not to your self only but to others.

Don't fail to be familiar with every publication of the Woman's Board of Home Missions.

Don't wait till the interest aroused from one effort has completely died out before starting something else.

Don't be discouraged if you have not the full cooperation of the other officers of the society. Pray for tact.

Don't give a blow to interest and enthusiasm by reading your report in a weak, low voice. If this arises from necessity, get another to read your report for you.

Don't fail to keep a book in which you will record the name and address of each subscriber to the magazines, date of subscription, and amount paid; leaflets distributed free, leaflets sold, leaflets read at meetings, leaflets sent out in the traveling package, money spent for literature, new methods used and the results, papers read and publications loaned. Such a record will be invaluable when you come to make up your annual report. This book should be the property of the society; it should be carefully kept from year to year, and transferred when a new officer is elected.

Don't rely so much on the machinery of your work, no matter how systematically planned, that you rely too little upon Him from whom must come the blessing.

The Literature Table.

The literature table at Presbyterial and Synodical meetings is an important factor in the dissem-

ination of missionary information. It should afford an opportunity for those who are present to secure the latest publications of the Board, to inspect the magazines and to obtain such information about the literature as is needed for the work.

Further than this, it should present the literature in such novel and attractive forms as to arouse the interest and curiosity of those who do not usually read, much less buy, missionary literature. All supplies for the literature table should be ordered two or three weeks in advance of the meeting, to insure their being delivered in abundant time for careful arrangement beforehand.

Previous to sending such an order write to each local secretary of literature asking how many copies of the Home Mission Calendar or other special publications can be sold in her society, suggesting that you will order any number she may designate with the supplies for your presbyterial meeting, and that they may be conveyed to her from that meeting by the delegate from her society, thus saving a little postage. She should be invited to attend the meeting and to visit the literature table herself.

Order all literature direct from headquarters, addressing Home Mission Literature Department, 156 Fifth avenue, New York City, N. Y.

In ordering the literature be explicit in every detail, stating the date of the meeting, the full name and address of the person to whom the literature is to be sent, with the name of the express office, if different from the post office. Also write a careful note of instructions to the person who is to receive the literature, mentioning when it was ordered, by what express it will come, and how and where you want it arranged.

Ask her to provide a basket or box for the money and to secure a cashier; to have the map (most important) hung in a good light in front of the congregation, and to have the literature in place before the devotional exercises.

Of course, much of this is unnecessary if it is possible to be in attendance yourself long enough before the meeting.

Nothing is more disastrous to the success of the literature table or the nerves of the secretary than

to arrive only a short time before the meeting and to find, after much searching, that the literature is on a chair in the basement in just the condition in which it was delivered.

It is most helpful to write each auxiliary secretary of literature about the new publications which will be on sale, and ask them to mention these to the members of their societies at their next meeting. This excites an interest in the subject, and materially aids the sale.

Also write the auxiliary secretary to assist you at the literature table.

Obviously, the literature secretary should herself be present and take charge of the literature table, but lest something may prevent this ask some one to assist you at the table, whose knowledge of the literature will prove most helpful in case of your absence, and who will prevent the sale from being a failure.

People will not buy what they do not know about, therefore take a portion of the time given you on the program for your report to speak of the various things which you have for sale. The best time to do this is just before there is an opportunity to buy the literature.

The Kind of Literature Needed.

Now we come to the question asked by so many literature secretaries: "What shall we order for the literature table?" And this is a question to which each should give much thought. For reasons which will be evident to all, the Literature Department of the Board cannot agree to receive back the soiled and rumpled left overs from all the presbyterial and synodical literature tables in the country, and hence the literature secretary must be careful to order only that which is likely to be sold. Of this she can be the only judge, as the needs and interests of localities differ. But right here the presbyterial or synodical contingent fund should come to the assistance of the literature secretary. The treasurer of the contingent fund should receive the receipts from and pay the bills for the literature. If there is a balance it will swell the contingent fund; if there is a deficit the

remaining leaflets may be profitably used in the presbytery or synod.

By this method the literature secretary will not offer a meager supply of literature for fear of personal loss, which she cannot afford; and on the other hand she will order with great care, desiring to turn a surplus into the contingent fund, rather than to draw something from it.

Some of the requests which are made at the literature tables will give an idea of how varied are the needs to be met:

"I want something interesting for children, boys especially;" "An entertaining leaflet to read at a sewing meeting;" "Something comforting to enclose in a letter;" "Something to arouse the interest of our young people;" "All the literature needed to show us how to arrange for a praise meeting;" "How can we start a missionary book club?" "What is the best leaflet to interest some one who is not interested in missions?" "Have you any leaflets telling how to raise money for missionary purposes?" "Which leaflet describes the missionary teas?" "Where shall I find how to make maps?" "Something new on Alaska, especially the Klondyke?" "The latest on the Mormon question, and the 'New Century Plan'?" "What is new on the monthly topics?" "Have you any nice leaflets to put in a box we are going to send to a missionary?" And sometimes comes the refreshing statement, "I want a sample of each, please."

Now it is just delightful to see such an interest in the literature, but when many of these questions are asked at once, when each one is anxious to make her purchase and have her luncheon before the afternoon session, and when some accompany their requests with a detailed statement of why they make them, it is easy to see that the literature secretary needs a goodly portion of tact and patience. To attempt to meet such varied demands she would need to purchase some of everything which the Board publishes, but experience has shown that it is not best to yield to this temptation.

Those who are sufficiently interested to seek for methods of work, plans for organization, map

making, etc., are very likely to secure this material when told what to get and where to get it.

But the literature table should always furnish all the new publications, and while those of our own Board should be given first choice, it is not necessary to stop there if some other publication seems to meet the need. It has been found a good plan to emphasize one or two things at each sale of literature, according to the need of the society, Presbyterial or Synodical. For example, if there is an appeal for more consecrated giving, supply a large number of any good leaflet on this subject and talk a little about it. "Her Offering," "Thanksgiving Ann," "Mrs. Pickett's Mission Box," "Inasmuch," or "God's Tenth," any one of these would do for this purpose. Or, if personal responsibility is the theme to be dwelt upon, use such a leaflet as "Why No More Time for the Master's Work?" "A Woman's Club of National Interest," or "Mrs. Matteson's Vision."

At one synodical meeting the thought to be emphasized was that we should do our work for Christ only. With this in view the literature secretary wished to secure a large reading of a certain leaflet. A mere mention of the title would not have aroused the desired interest, but a part of the story vividly told did, and all the leaflets were quickly sold at the noon hour; several persons saying when asking for them, "I want the leaflet you told about; I have forgotten the name."

Attractive Ways to Present the Literature.

A Souvenir.—A number of leaflets in attractive wrappings, suggestive of the theme of the day, as, the "Silver Anniversary Souvenir."

A Penny Scrap Basket.—A basket full of bright stories at a penny a piece.

A Package of Seed.—Several leaflets bound together in one package and sold for 5 or 10 cents. These may contain leaflets you wish to have read very generally, as, "The Sitka Training School," "The Building Fund," "Messengers," "My Experience, or Why I Tithe My Income," and always some good stories.

The Praise Meeting Package.—Containing samples of all the praise meeting publications.

The President's Own Budget.—"Hints and Helps," "Parliamentary Rules." The same idea may be carried out in reference to treasurers, secretaries, band leaders, etc.

The Children's Hour.—"How the Teacher Came for Tatchnee," "How There Came to Be Eight," "What Can Little Children Do?" "One Little Injun," "Crystal Mite Boxes," "Miss Helen's Drum Major."

The Devotional Hour.—"Prove Me Now Herewith," "Prayer and Missions," "Why No More Time for the Master's Work," "Manual of Prayer."

For the Sewing Circle.—"Our Missionary Box," "The Story of a Bed Quilt," "Mrs. Pickett's Missionary Box," "Thanksgiving Ann," "A Missionary Heroine."

The above leaflets are mentioned simply by way of suggestion. There are many more which would be equally appropriate.

Hints to the Nominating Committees.

Whom are you to select for your literature secretary? There is no office on your list which will demand more of the one who fills it. She is the person whose business it will be to supply the fuel to keep the fires of your missionary zeal brightly burning, and "where no wood is there the fire goeth out." If your secretary of literature does her work understandingly, and with system, and brings to it consecrated tact and an unquenchable enthusiasm, your missionary meetings will become more inspiring, the circle of interested ones will widen, and the missionary treasury will expand.

Certainly, then, the time has gone by—truly, it never existed—when just someone who "ought to be used," or "who needed an office to bring her to the meetings," or "whose social position would atone for all other deficiencies," should be chosen for your literature secretary. If, then, in all your congregation you have an intelligent, tactful and business-like woman, aim at securing her for this work. Further, when asking her to accept the office be sure you understand what it means, and

tell her all its duties and responsibilities. If not already acquainted with these, write to the Board, 156 Fifth avenue, New York City, for the leaflets of information. After she has read a description of her duties she will, if she consents to serve, know something of what her work is to be, and be able to enter upon it intelligently. Then we shall not have so many secretaries of literature writing, "What is expected of me?" "I was told there was nothing to do but to send the money for the magazines subscribed for in our society."

Better no secretary of literature than one appointed with such an impression of the work to be done.

A Leaflet Library for Secretaries of Literature.

"The Literature Secretary at Work."

"What One Secretary of Literature Did."

"The Remedy for Indifference."

"Parliamentary Rules."

"Map Locating Mission Stations."

"The Use of Maps in Missionary Meetings."

"The Annual Report of the Superintendent of School Work."

"The Contingent Fund."

"A Woman's Club of National Interest."

"Hints on Home Missions for Presbyterian Young People."

"Hints and Helps."

"Prove Me Now Herewith."

"Mrs. Agnew Canvassing for Missionary Magazines." Published by B. F. M., 156 Fifth avenue, New York City.

"Hints to Leaflet Secretaries." Published by W. H. M. S., of the Presbyteries of Allegheny and Pittsburg.

"Put Something of Yourself Into It." Published by W. H. & F. M. S., 383 Huntington avenue, Baltimore, Md.

"Our Publications, How Shall We Use Them?"

"Ask Somebody Else." Published by the W. F. M. S., 501 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, Pa.

Books for Home Mission Libraries, which may be ordered through the Woman's Board of Home Missions, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y.

	Price postpaid.
ALASKAN.	
Alaska, by Sheldon Jackson	$1 50
The Rainbow's End	1 50
Kin-da-shon's Wife, by Mrs. E. S. Willard	1 25
The Story of Metlakahtla, by H. S. Wellcome.	1 50
FREEDMEN.	
History of the Colored Race in America, by E. A. Johnson	75
Our Brother in Black, by Attigus Haygood	1 00
Whether White or Black—A Man, by E. S. Davis	75
INDIAN.	
Among the Pimas	25
Mary and I, or Forty Years Among the Sioux, by S. R. Riggs	1 50
By Canoe and Dog Train, by E. R. Young	1 25
Obwikapun, by E. R. Young	1 00
On the Indian Trail, by E. R. Young	1 00
Stories from Indian Wigwams and Camp Fires, by E. R. Young	1 00
A Century of Dishonor, by Helen Hunt Jackson	1 50
Two Volunteer Missionaries Among the Dakotas, by S W. Pond	1 25
The Chronicle of Conquest, by F. C. Sparhawk.	1 25
Our Life Among the Iroquois Indians, by Harriet S. Caswell	1 50
Carmio, the Little Mexican-Indian Captive, by Miss A. M. Barnes	75
MEXICAN.	
Ramona, by Helen Hunt Jackson	1 50
Some Strange Corners of our Country, by C. F. Lummis	1 50
Story of New Mexico, by H. O. Ladd	1 50
MORMON.	
The Rocky Mountain Saints, by Stenhouse (net)	2 00
MOUNTAINEERS.	
In Buncombe Country, by Maria L. Poole	1 25
The Young Mountaineer, by C. Egbert Craddock	1 50

	Price postpaid.
John Sevier, the Commonwealth Builder, by J. R. Gilmore	1 50
Rear-Guard of the Revolution	1 50
A Hero in Homespun	1 50

FOREIGNERS.

Emigration and Immigration, by R. Mayo-Smith	1 50
Housing of the Poor in American Cities, by M. T. Reynolds	1 00
How the Other Half Lives, by J. A. Riis	1 25

MISCELLANEOUS.

Our Country, by Josiah Strong (paper)	30
The New Era, by Josiah Strong (paper)	35
The Twentieth-Century City, by Josiah Strong (paper)	25
Makers of the American Republic, by Rev. David Gregg, D.D.	1 50
The Minute-Man on the Frontier, by Rev. W. G. Puddefoot	1 25
Ways That Win, by Mrs. C. S. Morgan	1 25

BIOGRAPHICAL.

David Brainerd, by Jesse Page	75
Story of Marcus Whitman, by Rev. J. A. Craighead	1 00
Father Eells, or the Results of Fifty-five Years of Missionary Labors in Washington and Oregon, by Myron Eells	1 25

A discount of 10 per cent. will be allowed on orders amounting to $3.00 or over.

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